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EDITORS SEEK MEETING WITH CARTER

Want to air objection to spy policy

Editors Thomas Winship and Charles Bailey, on behalf of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, have requested a personal meeting with President Carter to discuss editors' objections to the use by the Central Intelligence Agency of reporters as spies.

President Carter recently said that he supports the use of reporters as agents for the CIA "under extreme circumstances involving national security." The President's statement came after CIA director Stansfield Turner revealed that in the past three years, the CIA has approached three American correspondents, all of whom agreed to cooperate as spies.

"We are gravely concerned over the position that you and your Director of Central Intelligence have taken on the use of American journalists by the Central Intelligence Agency," Winship who is editor of the *Boston Globe* and president of ASNE and Bailey, who is editor of the *Minneapolis Tribune* and president of the Freedom of Information Committee, said in a letter to President Carter.

Pointing out that the ASNE includes "supervising editors of most of the nation's 1,750 daily newspapers," Bailey and Winship said their views are represented by the position taken by A.M. Rosenthal, editor of the *New York Times*.

Rosenthal has stated: "We send correspondents abroad as correspondents, not as agents. They ask their host countries to trust them, to give them special access, to allow them to travel about, and to enjoy the privileges of a correspondent whose only job is to gather the news.

"If it is the policy of the U.S. government to decide that it can on occasion use a foreign correspondent, every American correspondent abroad immediately becomes suspect.

"Why should any government trust any American correspondent under those circumstances? Admiral Turner says he planned on three occasions to use correspondents. 'Why believe him?' would be the natural reaction of any foreign government: 'Why not 300?'"

Rosenthal added, "It is so obvious that it is almost painful that this CIA policy puts into jeopardy the physical safety and ethical position of every American correspondent abroad."

Winship and Bailey said, "We find it

ironic that on the one hand, officials of your administration argue that the CIA must be exempt from judicial review under the Freedom of Information Act, on the ground that the mere existence of the machinery makes foreign sources reluctant to provide information—while on the other hand, the same officials cannot see that the mere existence of authority to use American correspondents as agents has exactly the same effect on the correspondents' ability to obtain information."

Winship and Bailey said the issue goes beyond the ability of American journalists to operate effectively abroad. "At issue in this matter," they said, "is the credibility of the American press at home and abroad—and in some cases the physical safety of correspondents."

"We believe the (Carter) administration simply does not understand why we are so concerned about this," Winship and Bailey wrote to the President. "If our concern were fully understood, we believe, the policy would surely be different. We would appreciate an opportunity to discuss this matter with you personally."

Carter's position has been, "We are not now using any newsmen. This would be done only under extreme circumstances and the personal approval of either Admiral Turner or myself would be required."